

### *H.R. 358 Would Allow Hospital Emergency Rooms to Deny Life-Saving, Medically Essential Abortions, Causing Unnecessary Deaths of Countless Women*

Washington, DC -- Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) this week voted to protect women's health care choices from a dangerous GOP-led assault on constitutionally protected rights. The legislation, H.R. 358, would soon make it illegal for millions of women to use their own money to purchase health insurance that provides abortion coverage. The bill would also give hospital emergency rooms the right to deny a woman's request for a medically essential abortion, even if denying the procedure would result in the certain death of the pregnant woman.

"This legislation isn't about protecting life or preventing taxpayer dollars from being spent on abortions, and in fact it would do quite the opposite," said Hinchey. "The bill would prohibit millions of women from choosing the health insurance plan that is right for them. It restricts their ability to spend their own private money on private insurance that provides coverage for abortion. Even worse is how the bill puts women's lives at risk by restricting emergency abortion access. Every year, women enter the emergency room because of pregnancy complications, and unfortunately sometimes they have to make painful and difficult choices. If this bill became law, a woman taken by ambulance to a hospital that refuses to provide abortion services could be denied a life-saving procedure. This bill puts the decision making power in the hands of the federal government and hospital CEOs, and that's just not right."

H.R. 358 would undermine the guarantee of emergency care under the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA). EMTALA creates a legal safety net that guarantees that anyone in need of emergency health care, including those unable to pay for health care, cannot be denied such care at hospitals. H.R. 358 would, in effect, strip EMTALA of its power to ensure that women in emergency situations receive abortion care at hospitals by making their right to health care secondary to the hospital's ability to refuse to provide abortion care.

Since 1976, the Hyde Amendment has prevented the use of federal tax dollars for abortions except in cases of rape or incest, or when the life of the woman would be endangered. There have been GAO audits, inspector general audits and congressional hearings, and all have concluded that the law of the land is being obeyed. The Affordable Care Act also contains a provision to prohibit the use of federal taxpayer dollars to fund abortions. H.R. 358 goes well beyond the scope of existing law and for the first time ever would restrict how private dollars are spent to purchase private insurance.

Hinchey is a strong advocate on behalf of women's health and consistently receives perfect ratings from the Planned Parenthood, The National Organization for Women and other groups that advocate on behalf of women's rights. Hinchey voted to end the health insurance industry's practice of "gender-rating," which requires women to pay more than men for the same coverage. He also voted to end discrimination based on a past pregnancy, C-section or domestic violence incident.

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